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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2009

In Today's Papers

Turkey-Armenia Reach 'Historic Consensus' to Normalize Ties  
Papers report a joint statement issued Monday by Turkey, Armenia, and Switzerland said Turkey and Armenia have decided to begin a "six-week negotiations process" which will lead to establishment of diplomatic ties. The agreement was reached through the intermediation of Switzerland. At the end of six-weeks, a deal reached on two protocols will be submitted to the parliaments of both countries for ratification. The protocols are related to the establishment of diplomatic relations and the development of ties between the two countries. The two protocols outline a framework for the normalization of bilateral relations "within a reasonable time." Turkey and Armenia will open diplomatic representations in each other's capitals and also take steps for the normalization of relations.

Islamist-oriented Zaman says Turkey and Armenia have made a "historic consensus" regarding the improvement of bilateral relations. Zaman speculates Armenia will recognize Turkey's borders, and all problems between the two countries, including the events of 1915, will be discussed by bilateral commissions. The paper says the opening of the border was not on the agenda. An unidentified source in Ankara told Zaman the opening of the border required improvements in the region. Zaman says the pace of the new process depends on developments in Nagorno Karabakh. Mainstream Haberturk says the border will be opened when Armenia withdraws from the occupied territories in Karabakh. The six-week period for the domestic consultations expires just before the soccer teams of the two countries meet in the city of Bursa on October 14 for a World Cup qualifier. Sargsyan said he would come to Turkey in October only if the border was opened.

Mainstream Hurriyet reports, "A warm period has begun in relations between Turkey and Armenia" as, "after a series of secret talks that were initiated in Switzerland, Turkish and Armenian authorities decided to sign a new protocol." The protocol is expected to be signed two days before the football match to be played on October 14 in Turkey. Commenting on the new era to begin between the two countries, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said that "No steps could be taken against Azerbaijan." Davutoglu also said that

borders would be recognized, diplomatic relations would be established and if everything goes well, embassies could be opened.

Mainstream Milliyet reports, "A concrete step to re-establish relations with Armenia that broke 16 years ago was taken yesterday."

The U.S. Supports Turkey-Armenia Rapprochement  
Milliyet, Hurriyet, HaberTurk carry reports Foreign Minister Davutoglu had phone call with Secretary Clinton prior to yesterday's announcement of the Turkey-Armenia protocol. They add, "meanwhile Turkish Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Sinirlioglu went to Baku to brief Azeris about the process."

Several Turkish television outlets, NTV, CNNTurk and Kanal 24 also report as of this morning the support for the rapprochement protocol from Washington by carrying Spokesman Ian Kelly's remarks. Highlights mostly are "The United States warmly welcomes the joint statement made today by Turkey and Armenia, with Swiss participation, outlining further steps in the normalization of their bilateral relations. We urge Armenia and Turkey to proceed expeditiously, according to the agreed framework as described in today's statement."

#### Editorials on Turkey-Armenia

Erdal Safak wrote in mainstream Sabah: "The most recent rapprochement protocol as detailed by Foreign Minister Davutoglu is a very important development regarding the future ties between Ankara and Yerevan. There is an important detail however in the road

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map. The deadline for six-weeks of internal political consultancy process ends right before the football match between Turkey and Armenia. Therefore the attendance of the Armenian president at the October 14 match is now even more important than before. If he does not attend, the whole process will likely be on hold."

Semih Idiz wrote in mainstream Milliyet: "This is a brave step for establishing diplomatic ties. The whole process will likely end up opening the borders. Even though we have no information at this point regarding Ankara's approach vis-à-vis Baku, but in any case the current rapprochement will positively contribute the Karabakh process."

Atalay: "We Will Announce Our Assessments Regarding the Kurdish Move in the Parliament"

All papers and TV Channels: Interior Minister Besir Atalay held a press conference yesterday on the progress in the "Democratic initiative." Atalay said that there were no concrete projects at hand however, the AKP government wanted to find a common ground in their meetings with various parties and develop it from there on. Atalay added that they would announce their proposals at the parliament and a constitutional amendment was not on their agenda, reports Sabah. Islamist-oriented/intellectual Zaman quotes Minister Atalay as saying "Everybody wants higher democratic standards. All segments of the society should take responsibility. A wide social compromise is needed for the success of the activities carried out within the scope of democratic move." Mainstream Hurriyet reports that Atalay noted that there was no amnesty on their agenda, first arms should be laid down.

Meanwhile, the opposition parties were not satisfied with Atalay's statements. Sabah reports that main opposition CHP deputy Mustafa Ozyurek said "My party did not see any light of hope. There is no proposal to be discussed." MHP deputy Osman Cakir said "It doesn't eliminate the threats when Atalay says there is no threat to state's unitary structure." Mainly Kurdish party DTP leader Ahmet Turk said that the press conference failed to meet the expectations and added that the opening will not realize without a new constitution.

#### Editorials on Government's Kurdish Initiative

Fehmi Kuru wrote in Islamist oriented Yeni Safak: "Along with Turkey's domestic efforts, the relationship between Iraq and Syria is also very important regarding the cooperation against terrorism."

Baghdad believes that recent terrorist attacks in the country stem from Iraqi Baath groups stationed in Syria. Therefore Minister Davutoglu has given a major focus on eliminating problems between the regional neighbors. Once all is well, Minister Davutoglu's goal is to establish a regional economic cooperation zone."

Fikret Bila wrote in mainstream Milliyet: "Minister Atalay in his press event emphasized the importance of Turkey's unitarian state structure and Turkish as an sole official language of the country. All of this indicates that within a month the government's and army's red lines have come to the same phrasing."

#### Davutoglu Visits Iraq, Syria

Media outlets report that on Monday, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu met with Syrian President Bashar al-Asad in Damascus. Speaking after the meeting, Davutoglu expressed optimism to ease tensions escalated between Iraq and Syria after attacks that targeted the finance and foreign ministries in Baghdad. "Syria and Iraq are our neighbors and this is a problem inside the family. We will do anything in our power to settle this problem and strengthen relations between brothers," Davutoglu told reporters. Earlier in the day, Davutoglu met Iraqi President Talabani and PM al-Maliki in Baghdad, and proposed the establishment of a tripartite mechanism between Turkey, Iraq and Syria in order to fight against terrorist attacks.

General Mc Chrystal: "The Taliban is a Matador, The U.S. Military is

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#### a Wounded Bull" (Sabah)

Mainstreams Sabah and Milliyet note that the BBC reported the commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, General Mc Chrystal, has written a long-anticipated report saying that the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan is not working. Milliyet headlines, "The U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan has collapsed." Sabah notes that General Mc Chrystal, suggested in his report that creating jobs for Taliban militants could resolve up to 60 percent of the insurgency problems in Afghanistan. Sabah also notes he compared the U.S. military to a bull charging at a matador, but the bull is getting weaker with each cut from the matador.

#### TV News (CNN Turk)

##### Domestic

- Trial of suspects charged with the killing of 44 people in Bilge village in the province of Mardin starts tomorrow in the city of Corum.
- On September 2, army chief General Ilker Basbug will host Ramadan fast breaking dinner for 800 relatives of martyred soldiers.
- On September 3, President Abdullah Gul will host Ramadan fast breaking dinner for the representatives of different Iraqi Turkmen groups.
- The IMF analysts say in a report economic openness may speed up recovery for large non-African developing countries including Turkey.
- Turkey's foreign trade deficit climbs to USD 3.4 billion in July.
- Turkish officials make preparations for tax probes into "secret accounts" in Swiss banks.

##### World

- Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu will join a meeting of EU Foreign Ministers in Stockholm on September 4-5.
- Greek Cypriot leader Christofias visits Damascus and meets Syrian Head of State Assad to discuss ferry services between northern Cyprus and Syria.
- Iraq has delayed by a year a plan to hold its first nationwide

census in two decades.

- Suspected militants have blown up more than 20 vehicles carrying NATO supplies from Pakistan's Karachi port to Kandahar in Afghanistan.
- Iraqi authorities say they are negotiating the return of 19 fighter jets sent to the former Yugoslavia in the 1980s for repairs.

JEFFREY